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ABSTRACT

An elementary school administrator designed and implemented a 12-week summer program for school-age children that provided educational, recreational, and cultural opportunities. Each week of activities centered on a specific theme. Recreational opportunities included sports activities, outdoor games, organized indoor games, free play, swimming, bowling, and arts and crafts. Educational situations allowed children to learn about mathematics, language arts, music, and the Bible. Children were given opportunities to learn about other cultures and to explore their own heritage. Field trips were encouraged. Outcome data were positive and program goals were met. Related materials, such as publicity, correspondence, and a parent questionnaire, are appended. (RH)

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The Design and Implementation of a Summer Care Program for
School Age Children of Working Parents

by

Joyce Volpini

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A Practicum I Report presented to the
Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY
1990

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Date of Final Approval of
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Abstract

The Design and Implementation of a Summer Care Program for School Age Children of Working Parents. Volpini, Joyce, 1990: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood. Descriptors: School-Age Child Care / Day Care / Summer Programs / Elementary Education / Day Camp Programs / Camp Programs / Outdoor Education / Recreational Programs / Extended School Year / Program Development / School Community Programs

This practicum was designed to improve the school age child's summer care situation in the writer's local community. It was found that this particular community situation did not offer a sufficient number of school age child care hours to working parents particularly during the summer. The primary goal was to provide quality child care for these school age children with sufficient time allotments for youngsters whose parents worked a variety of hours during the summer season. It was also important to establish a program which was affordable for parents with a variety of enjoyable activities for the children.

The writer designed and implemented a 12-week summer program for school age children. The program consisted of educational, recreational, and cultural opportunities for these youngsters. Each week was designated with a different theme and the activities for that particular week revolved around that theme. The children were offered a variety of recreational possibilities which included sports activities, outdoor games, organized indoor games, free play, swimming, bowling and arts and craft activities. Educational situations were also provided and included math, language arts, music, and Bible studies. The children were also provided with opportunities to familiarize themselves with various cultures, and also explored their own heritage. Field trips were encouraged to assist in the exploration of the many themes.

The results of the program were quite positive and the goals and objectives of the practicum were met. Questionnaires were used for parents and staff members as the evaluation instrument, and an analysis of all objectives revealed that better than 90% of the parents were satisfied with the numerous facets of the program. Results also revealed favorable responses from 18 out of 20 staff members in all areas and favorable responses from all 20 in most phases of the program.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Description of the Work Setting and Community

The work setting in which this practicum will take place is an elementary/middle parochial school which is associated with a fairly large archdiocese in the eastern part of the country. It is located in a city on the outskirts of a large metropolitan area. The city has a population of approximately 15,000 people and covers 3.2 square miles. The school itself is a huge brick building which is in generally good condition considering that it is nearly half of a century old.

At the present time the school serves 400 families of various ethnic groups and backgrounds. Most of the families belong to a low-middle socio-economic bracket. Many of the children come from homes where both parents are employed or from single parent homes. There are some families where only one parent works and the other is still at home.

This educational facility accommodates nearly 500 children who range in age from four - 14 years of age. Because of the size of the school, there are 25 teachers and several supportive staff members employed. These individuals vary in family background, ethnic origin, age, and educational experience. The number of years of teaching experience ranges from as high as 40 years to as low as five. Academic degrees include three masters, three masters

equivalents, one masters degree in progress, and the remaining number have met the requirements for a bachelor of arts or science degree.

Revenue to operate the school is secured through tuition payments made by the parents, fundraising activities and some subsidy from the parish community.

Since the school is church oriented very little funding or financial assistance of any kind is received from the state or local government.

An important part of the school's mission is to provide daily religious education classes where prayer, morals and values are shared and discussed.

Writer's Role in the Work Setting

The writer in this work setting is an elementary/middle school administrator, who is responsible for the facilitation of management and organization in the school. Among other things, this includes policy development, financial planning, curriculum planning, staffing, public relations and maintaining the religious nature of the school and the development of the faith community.

The writer's background and training include a bachelor of arts degree in education, a master of science degree in counseling and a state certification. Work is presently being done toward a doctoral degree in education. Past experience includes teaching on the elementary and middle school level for a number of years before getting involved in administration. The writer has also worked as a

teacher-counselor for a summer program in a major urban setting for low income Puerto Rican youth, coordinator of parish youth activities, coach and athletic advisor for youth teams, counseling unwed mothers through a church affiliated organization and as teacher in an Upward Bound Program for black youth in a large urban city.

Present involvements include membership on various parish committees, a member of the the board of directors for a local catholic high school, coach for a school softball team, and athletic advisor for parish sports. The writer is also a member of various educational associations including the National Catholic Education Association, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the National Association for the Education of young Children, and the Elementary School Principals Association.

Chapter II

Study of the Problem

Problem Description

Many of the children in the community came from family situations where both parents were employed or from single parent families where there was a definite need for parent employment. During the school year a number of these children were registered and attended the before and after care program which was provided by the school. This alleviated any concerns that the parents might have had if the children were at home without adult supervision. Since the before after care program ceased at the end of the regular school year, these children and many other school age children of working parents did not have sufficient supervision and care during the summer months. This posed a difficult situation for these working parents and their children.

There were also very few available community programs in the vicinity which offered a sufficient number of child care hours. Many of the programs offered by recreational organizations were those which were referred to as "walk-in" programs where children of school age had come and gone as they pleased. A local day camp which had been in operation for a number years had to close because the facility used was no longer available. This had compounded the school age child care situation in this area.

It appeared that efforts were being made in some communities to alleviate the problem of school age child care during the summer months, but this trend seemed to relate more directly to the middle and upper middle class neighborhoods. Despite the need for child care generally, only a minimal amount of energy appeared to be directed toward such communities as the one described in the setting. It was possible that lack of facilities, personnel, and/or finances could have been part of the difficulty.

The problem therefore, was that the existing community did not provide summer programs with a sufficient number of hours or weeks for school age children of working parents. This meant that a plan had to be implemented to ensure a program which offered quality child care with sufficient time allotments for school age children of working parents during the summer weeks.

Problem Documentation

It was evident that the local problem existed since approximately 170 families expressed an interest in the summer program by responding positively to a pre-registration (see Appendix A). The parents filled out the form and returned it to school by a certain date. These responses expressed interest in having such a program available to the children.

Further investigation of area summer programs had generally shown that insufficient hours of care were provided for school age children of parents, who for

economic reasons, had to work. This could be seen clearly after perusal of local newspapers which listed various types of programs available to the children of the community (see Appendix B). These programs were publicized as "walk-in" programs with operating hours from 9:30 a.m. to approximately 3:30 p.m. There were also some programs of a two or three week duration with extended care. Although such programs were somewhat helpful they did not fulfill the needs of children who need summer care for a longer period of time. A brief letter written by a city official also presented verification that such programs relative to alleviating the school age child care problem did not exist in this local community (see Appendix C).

Causative Analysis

The causes of the problem were related to several factors. The first factor, and probably the greatest, appeared to have had a strong economic base. Since the cost of living today is considerable, very often both parents must work. In the case of a single parent family, it was obvious that the parent had to work to provide for the children. Because there are so many working parents, the need for quality child care was a constant concern.

Another factor related to the cause of the problem seemed to be that local community officials were not prepared to meet the needs of working parents and their children, or were not able to provide these programs. It was not certain, at that point in time, what the deterring

issue was in making provisions for summer programs with extended hours and weeks, but their lack of involvement tended to prolong the difficulties.

In considering the third contributing factor to the problem, it appeared that many parents believed that their school age children, especially primary grade children, were too young to be on their own for 10 or 11 hours a day, or left with teen-aged sitters for such a long period of time. It was also difficult for parents to find a family member or relative who was willing to provide child care since, very often, these individuals were also employed. This point also led to the last factor related to the cause of the problem. Since today's society does not generally tend to promote the nuclear and/or extended family tradition, parents did not have baby sitters within the family unit. This meant that parents had to look elsewhere for quality child care.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

After reviewing the literature, most of the material had been written generally about child care for school age children. Bronfenbrenner, Belsky and Steinberg (1977) indicated by their studies that today an ever increasing number of children, including those of school age, were cared for by others. This growing number of children in day care and in before and after school care facilities was due not only to an increase in the number of one-parent families where the parent had to work, but also to the large number

of families where both parents must work. This very often was related to financial need, but could have been associated with a variety of other reasons also.

Working parents made various arrangements for the care of their children, especially young children, during the year. Some children were in home care situations while others were cared for by friends, neighbors or sometimes by relatives. Although these were all alternatives for child care, an increasing number of parents had enrolled their children in some type of day-care facility. Since school age child care facilities were not as prevalent, some children were not cared for in any adult supervised situation after school, during vacation, or throughout the holidays.

According to Long and Long (1983) many of these children who were not under adult supervision after school hours were referred to as latch-key children because their parents sometimes hung keys around their necks and they returned daily to their empty homes. Zylke (1988) pointed out that the concept of latch-key children was a problem in our society, and believed that whenever possible, children should be cared for by adults. This not only included before and after school hours but also during vacation times.

There were some programs which had been designed for school age children during the summer months, but many of them had been established for outdoor and/or sports

activities (see Appendix B). These types of programs were not always appropriate for all children since not all youngsters were lovers of the great outdoors nor did they view themselves as sports enthusiasts. Fink (1987) also noted that a large community sponsored summer program had been designed to meet the needs of disabled children (see Appendix B). In this case, the project initially experienced success in the community when schools in the area provided extended care for students with disabilities. This was eventually expanded to a summer camp concept which included the enrollment and participation of some autistic children. Contessa (1985) also suggested summer enrichment programs which combined language arts skills and outdoor activities especially designed for the gifted child. Although all of these summer programs offer advantageous situations and child care for various types of children, none of the above mentioned summer programs or child care possibilities offered such programs for the normal, everyday child. Therefore, the problem of the availability of adequate, quality child care for children of working parents was, once again, brought into the spotlight.

Clarke-Stewart (1982) reported that in the 1970's and the early 1980's many women entered the world of the working mother, thus underscoring the growing need for child care throughout this country. Of course, a great deal has been written about child care for young children, but not nearly enough for school age children. Since there were concerns

regarding so-called latch-key children during the school year and writers such as Zylke (1988) and Isenberg (1987) argued that such children may very well be at risk because of the lack of adult supervision, it appeared that such concerns would have certainly carried over and still have been very real during the summer months. Zigler (1980) commented that many working parents agreed that children, even school age children, should not be left alone, but should be under adult supervision. Child care for school age children needed further study, and programs should be provided to alleviate the concerns of working parents.

Reference was made earlier in the text to sports camps which were offered for children during the summer months. Those who provided these camps for children evidently believed that these programs offered many positive activities. Nevertheless, they provided formal group activities which were organized and maintained by adults. McElroy (1982) reported that children who are, in a sense, forced to participate in sports or specialized activities, sometimes suffered from a reduction in self esteem and felt embarrassment when they failed to reach the expectations they believed their parents were looking for. Eikind (1982) also described unnecessary stress that was placed on children when they were pushed to premature involvement in organized sports and activities.

After the literature was reviewed and studied and the various points were represented by the materials, it again

appeared that the problem of school age child care existed. This problem was not only present throughout the academic year but also during the summer months and over holiday periods. The variety of options offered to school age children ranging from the latch-key experience, sports camps, outdoor camping situations, and camping for exceptional youngsters, obviously did not reach out to the needs of all school age children. It could be concluded that child care for school age children was an area open to further exploration. It was obvious that if such large numbers of children needed child care before and after school during the school year, then many of these same children could have benefitted from summer child care programs. These programs required planning for the school age child, with the hope of assisting them in experiencing and enjoying their childhood.

Chapter III

Anticipated Outcomes and Evaluation Instruments

Goals and Expectations

Generally, the goals to be achieved after the three month implementation period of the practicum were to provide a quality summer program with a sufficient number of child care hours for children of working parents. This school age child care program had taken place during summer vacation months when these children were normally out of school. Specific objectives included quality school age child care to accomodate a variety of work schedules. Other objectives provided educational, recreational, and cultural opportunities, as well as an economically sound and cost effective program. It was also expected to have provided time for siblings to share some time together during the day.

Behavioral Objectives

The following objectives were projected for this practicum:

Objective 1: During the three month implementation period quality child care was provided for approximately 200 children, ranging in age from 4 to 12 years of age, as evidenced by positive written feedback from qualified personnel providing a measure of achievement for the program.

Objective 2: During this implementation period 11 hours of child care was available to accomodate a variety of parents' work schedules as evidenced by completed questionnaires from parents indicating that 85-90% of the parents are satisfied with the time schedule offered by the program (see Appendix D) and questionnaires completed by teachers indicating that 18 out of 20 teachers are satisfied with the number of work hours available to them (see Appendix E).

Objective 3: Through the program's implementation educational, recreational, and cultural opportunities were provided for the children's enjoyment and enrichment as evidenced by a re-enrollment and satisfaction factor of 85% or better from parent questionnaires, staff planning, and evaluation.

Objective 4: During the implementation of the three-month program, it was determined that the program was economically sound and cost effective for these parents as evidenced by 90% of the parents indicating the rates are within their financial means, and that 18 out of 20 staff members would agree that payment for services was fair and competitive.

Objective 5: During the implementation of the program, it was demonstrated that approximately 40 children who are enrolled and who have siblings in the program will have the opportunity to spend two and one half hours of various parts of the day with their brothers and sisters as evidenced by the writer's observations, teacher, and parent

questionnaires (see Appendices D & E) demonstrating that this time was made available.

Measurement of Objectives

Objective one was measured by the writer's request for written feedback from qualified personnel in the local geographic area. These individuals have worked with children of varying age levels and have experienced a variety of recreational, educational, and child care programs.

Objective two was measured by the writer's compilation and evaluation of the parent and teacher questionnaires which were devised specifically for this practicum. Successful implementation of the program was partially based on 85-90% of the parents responding satisfactorily to the varied time schedule offered by the program. It was also important to measure and determine whether the teachers were satisfied with the number of work hours offered to them.

Objective three was measured by positive feedback noted on the parent questionnaires, teacher response forms, and letters of evaluation from experienced personnel. These forms were structured in such a way as to allow parents and teachers to comment specifically on the educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities offered to the children. Satisfaction and re-enrollment indicators from respondents were expected to reach 85% or better.

Objective four was measured once again, by using responses from parent and teacher questionnaires regarding

the cost effectiveness of the program for parents, and fair and competitive wages for teachers. Responses were tabulated by the writer.

Objective five was measured through the writer's observation of the various opportunities offered to children who had brothers and/or sisters in the program to share some time together during the day. Other indicators of the effectiveness of this objective was measured by the teacher and parent questionnaires designed by the writer.

Chapter IV

Solution Strategy

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

As previously mentioned, the problem which existed in this local community was that there were no summer programs which provided a sufficient number of child care hours/weeks during the summer for children of working parents. Many of the programs available in the area during the summer months were walk-in programs where children of school age had come and gone as they pleased.

After reviewing the literature relevant to the problem of school age child care, it appeared that information on the subject was somewhat limited. Investigation of this child care issue indicated that quite a bit had been written on before/after school child care and Packard (1983) suggested that schools be encouraged to extend their days in order to alleviate, at least, that particular part of the problem. Although using school buildings for extended care seemed to be a logical solution to one aspect of school age child care, Caldwell (1986) explained that a number of educators believed that child care and education were at odds. Child care, on the one hand, was a service which provided care and protection for children, while schools, on the other hand, provided academic growth. Unfortunately, negative connotations had also been associated with child care. In the past, it was viewed as a poor child's

situation while public education has always been every child's right. Caldwell (1986) also noted that schools which participated in extended care and summer programs were primarily in the private sector but public schools were being encouraged to share in this worthwhile venture.

In exploring the issue of school age child care, there were some areas which presented a more positive outlook. In an article written by Winter (1990) several suggestions regarding what to do with school age children during the summer months were offered and noted here. It seemed that youth organizations in various parts of the country responded to the child care needs of working parents. The Girls Clubs of America, Inc. was one group which involved their participants in a variety of activities such as outdoor recreation, computer courses, photography, cooking and a variety of other programs which were specific to the needs of a certain age group. These programs were for girls from ages five to 14, and usually provided child care for at least 10 hours of the day for an eight to 10 week period. Another area researched by Winter (1990) was the day camp programs offered by the Campfire Girls and Boys. These camps were provided for seven to 12-year-olds and offered 12 one-week sessions. If a parent wished, a child could be enrolled for all 12 weeks. Each week was designated with a different topic and there were a variety of field trips available.

Since there are more working mothers in the work force today and they are attempting to balance a career with raising a family, Friedman (1985) reported that many women were demanding that their employers take a more active role in meeting their needs. In order to solve that problem, a number of employers have offered various forms of child care. Although a great deal of employer provided child care was offered for younger children, some employers provided after school programs and summer day camps of various types for school age children.

Donley and Agar (1984) described in their article the implementation of a 10-week summer day camp program in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The program not only offered child care but also very positive learning experiences without the structure of the classroom. This particular program enabled children to explore museums in the surrounding areas from a historian's point of view. At the culmination of the program, each child ultimately designed his/her own museum exhibit.

A summer outdoor enrichment program was designed by Dohey and Johnstone (1989) for elementary and middle school students from a rural area. The activities provided for the children included language arts skills using outdoor education content. The children were responsible for keeping a journal during the entire program experience. Vocabulary exercises, word games, reading and creative writing all revolved around the outdoor theme. Field trips

of various types were also offered. This particular program combined the experiences of the great outdoors with something exciting and educational during the summer months.

The writer also has discovered a few programs similar in nature to the one presented in the practicum, although it was obvious that these programs came in various shapes and sizes. They were designed uniquely to meet the needs of a particular community. Baden, Genser, Levine, and Seligson (1982) noted one such program which was a joint effort between the YMCA and an existing summer school. The various facets of the program included a combination of both education and recreation. Morning events included an educational approach while afternoon hours offered a choice of recreational activities. Each facet of the program took place in a different environment and children were transported by bus from morning to afternoon exercises. A particularly positive attraction to this program was the possibility of receiving a hot or cold breakfast at not extra cost. The staff members and school personnel worked closely together for the benefit of the children and promoted an active role for parents. For these reasons, among others, the program met with a great deal of success.

Of course, it was impossible to list each individual program suggested in the literature but Packard (1983) suggested a few general ideas which can be related to the topic. Ideas which were presented included year round programs for school age children in preference to a nine

month school year, and the possibility of community agencies becoming more involved in solving the school age child care problem.

In reviewing the solutions offered by the literature, it seemed that all have their merit and have evidently had positive results in their individual settings. Although it was not likely that the writer would set up a program exactly similar to any of the ones listed in the literature review, it was certainly possible that a number of suggestions would be combined and implemented in this work setting. Possibilities for use in this writer's situation included the variety of activities, topics, and field trips offered through the programs sponsored by the various boys and girls clubs. The careful combination of outdoor activities and educational features presented by the outdoor enrichment program also provides possible food for thought in this setting. Certainly, all of the solutions proposed by the literature can assist the writer in achieving the specific goals and objectives desired.

Description of Selected Solution

It was obvious that day care for young school-age children including before and after school, during school holidays and vacations when parents must work remained a serious problem for more families every year. This issue has finally begun to receive the much needed attention that it deserves. Various groups such as churches, park and recreation departments and collaborations between public

schools and other organizations have begun to provide some interest and efforts in this area. According to the U.S. Department of Labor (1981), over 65 percent of mothers of school-age children were in the work force. As the need continues to grow so must efforts be made to ease the concerns of these working parents and to alleviate the problem of insufficient school-age child care.

With these points in mind, the writer was prepared to design, implement and direct a 12-week summer program for school age children whose parents must work during the summer vacation months. The program consisted of educational, recreational, and cultural opportunities. It was likely that such a program would be a successful and positive addition in the area since there was very little offered in the local community in the way of summer care for school age children. Another important aspect which was indicative of the success of such a program was the parent interest which it had generated through discussion and suggestions on their part.

Report of Action Taken

In order to facilitate the implementation of this program in the summer of 1990, the following steps were taken as a means of reaching that particular goal.

Initially, it was necessary to investigate the possibility of using the existing school facility. Once permission had been granted by the pastor of the parish the number of hours that would be provided for child care, along

with the number of children that could be accepted for the program, the ages served, and the groupings for those children were established. It was determined for our purposes that 11 hours of child care for children from ages four and a half to twelve was sufficient.

A very necessary point to consider in establishing such a program was to prepare a budget which included the cost to the parents and an overview of what teachers and aides would be paid. It was important that the program was cost effective for parents, but also provided enough income to take care of the entire operation. While the budget was prepared it was important to keep in mind the expectations the writer had for the program. Although salaries were a serious consideration and would naturally assume a great deal of the income, other areas such as custodial expenses, fringe benefits, utilities, equipment, consumable supplies, food, transportation, publicity, licensing, and insurance fees had to be considered where applicable. One also had to consider costs for recreational activities such as swimming, bowling, and skating.

Before further plans were made for the program, the goals and philosophy were explored and established. Following this task the themes and activities for the various weeks were determined. The distribution of information and registration of participants was then necessary. A registration fee was designated as part of the process and helped to alleviate some of the initial costs.

Since the activities and themes were determined first, planning and preparation for field trips was appropriate at this point. Transportation was also arranged. Many of these trips coincided with the themes for the weeks.

Visiting groups and individuals who provided educational, recreational, and cultural entertainment for the children were scheduled. These groups and individuals were arranged according to theme. Scheduling arrangements for sports activities, including gym facilities, swimming, bowling, and outdoor sports and games was completed.

The hiring of staff members involved in the implementation of the summer program was an important factor of the planning stage. These members included senior staff, teacher assistants, and junior aides. Once the staff had been chosen, it was determined who would be responsible for various areas such as audio visuals, transportation, arts and crafts, etc. Information and materials were sought for use during various theme weeks. During the planning and orientation sessions recommendations were made to assist the teachers in finding other helpful resources. Educational materials for language arts, math, and reading were explored to determine which materials would be used for the children in this type of program.

Parents were informed of the policies for the program along with important dates, including the first and last days. It was also necessary to inform them about various field trips, themes and activities for the weeks, daily

routine, lunch, snack and medical information. Permission slips were signed and returned in order to ensure the children's participation in the various trips.

Since it was necessary to keep the building clean and in order, the custodial staff was hired and expectations communicated. Possible problems and difficulties related to this particular area were explored.

The progress and success of the program depended a great deal on the cooperation and support of the summer staff. The program began on a positive note, orientation of the staff was provided, and it was a pleasant and supportive experience. As the program moved forward, scheduled staff meetings took place every two weeks to allow for further planning and evaluation. A complete evaluation period was provided at the end of the summer program. This was done not only through use of the questionnaires but also during the final staff meetings which were designated for evaluation purposes. Discussions with staff members and some brainstorming activities helped to present a clear overview of summer activities.

The time line established in the proposal phase of the practicum was followed as initially outlined. In addition to what is noted below, each morning the children had activities which included reading, language arts skills, and math enrichment. Bible studies and music were also a part of the morning schedule. The materials for these educational activities were chosen by the summer staff.

Books, audio-visuals, and manipulative materials were not used for remedial purposes, but primarily for enrichment. The children spent approximately three hours each morning on the various subject areas. It was not a time devoid of fun and enjoyment. Various presentation methods, games, music, and group involvement made this portion an enjoyable time rather than a drudgery. Although there was a scheduled time for each of the listed subjects, the schedules were neither rigid nor did they lack creativity.

The rest of the day provided a variety of recreational and cultural activities. The staff also managed to add some fun-filled activities with a touch of educational value.

Week one provided time for teachers, aides, custodial, secretarial, and administrative staff to meet and finalize the happenings of the next 11 weeks. The staff, at this point, had the opportunity to make sure that all questions were answered, all materials organized, pertinent schedules prepared, rooms readied, information read, and lines of communication established. Important details regarding daily procedures were discussed and noted. These included fire procedures, emergency and first aid procedures, release of a child to adults other than parents and everyday routine situations.

The second week was the orientation and get-acquainted week for the four and five-year olds only. The writer felt that a special week for these youngsters would be extremely beneficial since some of them had not been in a program-type

situation before. It presented a period of time when staff members could get to know these younger members and get them acclimated to the program. Some of the events in this special orientation week for the younger set included exploration of their new environment, an overview of the play area, use of materials, and sharing exercises. A tour of the larger plant and grounds was also part of the agenda. It was explained where the older children would spend their time and that there would be times when the older children would share various activities with them. The children were also introduced to the gym facilities and took part in swimming and water play. Drawings, paintings, and experience stories were follow-up activities.

During this particular week no activities were scheduled for the older children. They were scheduled to arrive the following week.

During week three the program was well on its way. The older children, ages six through 12, arrived and began to participate in "Health and Safety Week". Some of the highlights of the week included presentations from various health and safety personnel. The fire and police departments provided discussion time, and distributed materials offering some safety tips. The gas and electric company also provided a speaker who shared the positive and negative aspects of electricity. As this week progressed, each teacher noted on his/her lesson plan the various health and safety materials and activities used during the week.

Week four was designated as "50's Week". The children were given the opportunity to enjoy and experience some of the nostalgia of that time period. During that week teachers used "50's" trivia in designing arts and crafts activities and games. Music was played from that era throughout the week and songs and dances were taught. The week was culminated with a "Sock Hop". All children from the youngest to the oldest participated. Each group had a special "50's" dance or song which they presented as part of the entertainment. It provided a very positive end to a busy week.

During week five the entire group celebrated our country with a "Hooray for the U.S.A.". Although there were no program activities scheduled for July 4th, the rest of the week was filled with patriotic activities. Arts and crafts, writing activities, stories, plays and puppet shows were all centered around the United States of America. Different parts of the country, the people, their various customs and, of course, the flag were celebrated. Each teacher made a special effort to plan each day with a patriotic overtone. The physical education teacher had each group work out their own "march" routine for presentation to all of the children. The week ended with a performance by a magician whose entire act cheered for the red, white and blue.

Week six was designated for "Fairy Tales and Make believe". The children's activities focused on this theme.

Each teacher had his/her group prepare a puppet show or play based on a favorite fairy tale. A puppeteer was scheduled during the week to share some tips on puppet making with the children. The high light of this particular week was the trip to an amusement park which had a fairy tale theme.

An "International" flavor was added to the seventh week as the children were given the opportunity to explore their heritage. During this week the children spent some time reading about various countries and cultures. They managed to get the parents involved by working with their children on a family tree. Music and dances from different countries were learned and shared. Art projects included different forms of dress, symbols and flags from various countries, and passports to these countries. Some of the groups even found a way to taste that international flavor. They had an international luncheon.

A time for "Entertainment" was scheduled for the eighth week and it was filled with exactly that. The children were given the opportunity to test their talents and provide entertainment for one another. A variety of songs, dances, jokes, magic and puppet shows were shared and enjoyed. In addition to the amateur presentations, several shows were offered by a more professional element. These programs included a hula hoop expert, a singer whose songs were written with the environment in mind, a rap group, and a "fair day" which provided fun, food, and games.

The ninth week was set aside for puppets and provided the children with various puppet-making possibilities. They also planned and performed their own puppet shows. Once again, art projects, stories, movies, and music revolved around this theme. The children also were able to view a real puppeteer at work. The puppeteer displayed hand puppets, string puppets and bag puppets. After the performance the children made their own bag puppets.

During the tenth week, sports were the center of attention and emphasis was placed on various sports activities. The children were taught the basics of basketball, kick ball, tether ball, t-ball, and soccer. They then had the opportunity to participate in each one of them. Involvement and enjoyment were the primary concerns. Skill, competition, and winning were secondary. At the end of the week, a basketball player who was originally a member of the Harlem Globe Trotters, talked to the children about sportsmanship and team play. He also presented quite a performance with his basketball antics.

The eleventh and final week for the children had a "Pets and Animals" theme. Stories, music, and art projects were all related to this theme. Although the children did not go to the zoo, the zoo was brought to them. A small traveling zoo was part of this week's happenings. The zoo keeper, so to speak, talked about the animals and later had the children touch and pet them. They also were taught how

to care for pets while learning many interesting facts about them.

The final week of the program had been designated for clean-up, inventory, and evaluation. During that time emphasis was placed on making sure that the facility was left in excellent condition. Although each teacher made efforts to get rooms in order, the custodial staff was an asset in this important task. Inventory was a primary concern for the teachers who worked during the summer months. All materials had to be accounted for, and returned to a central place for future use. Since the school would be populated in the very near future with students beginning a new school year, the teachers realized the importance of returning materials, books, games, and audio-visuals used during the summer program to the proper storage areas.

Lastly, evaluation was a necessary task for the staff to complete during that week. This was a means by which the writer measured how well the program achieved the goals that had been set. The evaluation was done internally by having the staff discuss the positive and negative aspects of the program, along with recommendations for the future. They also responded to a questionnaire designed for those who worked in the program. Parents were also given the opportunity to evaluate the program by means of a questionnaire which attempted to pin point the areas most important to the needs of the parents. The summer program was also evaluated externally by individuals who worked in

various child care services in the area. This type of evaluation tended to add a more objective viewpoint. The feedback from these evaluations were tabulated, and presented in this report.

During the three month implementation phase of this practicum, there were no significant deviations from the writer's plans, nor were there any significant difficulties. One slight deviation which was made from the original schedule primarily for the purpose of safety, was the change in the swimming schedule for preschool children. The staff found that it was much easier to supervise these children at water play activities on school grounds, as opposed to a large community pool. It was also noticed that the children enjoyed these activities as much as going to the community pool.

Chapter V

Results, Discussion, Recommendations, And Dissemination

Results

The problem that existed in the writer's work setting was that the local community did not provide summer programs with a sufficient number of child care hours or weeks for school age children of working parents.

The solution to the problem was the design and implementation of a summer program for school age children. The writer felt that such a program would offer quality child care with sufficient time allotments for these children whose parents worked a variety of hours during the summer weeks.

Generally, the goals of the practicum were to provide a quality summer program with a sufficient number of child care hours for children of working parents. This program was designed to accomodate a number of work schedules. Provisions were made for the children's involvement in the educational, recreational, and cultural opportunities offered.

Specific objectives were designed to achieve the goals stipulated. The following information specifies each objective and offers the results related to these objectives.

Objective 1: During the three month implementation period quality child care was provided for approximately 200

children, ranging in age from 4 to 12 years of age, as evidenced by positive written feedback from qualified personnel providing a measure of achievement for the program.

Written responses were sought from individuals who are consistently involved in some form of child care or who participate in the organization and planning of such programs. The writer requested that a local day care director, an administrator from the city park and planning commission, and the city council president take some time to observe the program while it was in session or to review some of the feedback from parents and/or staff members. The following comments were taken from written communications submitted by these individuals:

1. The program offered a safe environment where working parents could leave their children and feel secure in doing so.
2. The program offered a variety of activities geared particularly to the school age child.
3. The program offered full day child care services for children of working parents.
4. The program enriched their academic skills, taught the basics of a variety of sports and offered cultural experiences.

Objective 2: During this implementation period 11 hours of child care was available to accommodate a variety of parents' work schedules as evidenced by completed questionnaires from

parents indicating that 85-90% of the parents are satisfied with the time schedule offered by the program, and questionnaires completed by teachers indicating that 18 out of 20 teachers were satisfied with the number of work hours available to them.

Questionnaires were distributed during the tenth week of the program to the parents and teachers. This gave the writer the opportunity to remind parents and teachers about the importance of returning them. It is important to note at this time that 112 parents answered and returned their questionnaires. Approximately 160 questionnaires were distributed. After tabulation of the responses, it was demonstrated that the parents were quite satisfied with the number of hours which were provided by the program. These hours obviously accommodated a variety of work schedules. Table 1 provides an illustration of this information gathered.

Table 1

Parental Satisfaction Regarding the Number of Hours
Offered by the Program

Total Number of Parent Responses - 112		
<u>N</u>	<u>Response Type</u>	<u>Degree of Satisfaction</u>
104	Yes	92.86%
8	No	7.14%
112		100.00%

It was also demonstrated by the responses from the teacher's questionnaires that the majority of teachers who worked in the program were satisfied with the number of working hours available. Twenty teachers and assistants answered the questionnaires. Table 2 provides the data which displays the results of this objective.

Table 2

Teacher Satisfaction With Work Hours

Total Number of Teacher Responses - 20	
<u>N</u>	<u>Response Type</u>
17	Yes
1	No
20	

Objective 3: Through the program's implementation educational, recreational, and cultural opportunities were provided for the children's enjoyment and enrichment as evidenced by a re-enrollment and satisfaction factor of 85% or better from parent questionnaires, staff planning, and evaluation.

The responses from the parents indicated general overall satisfaction regarding the various types of activities offered to the children. Some parents added a few comments in relation to this particular point. Such comments included the possibility of having more field trips

available to the children as well as additional opportunities for swimming and other activities. Table 3 summarizes the results of the responses to this part of objective 3.

Table 3

Satisfaction With Educational, Recreational, and Cultural Aspects of the Program

Total Number of Parental Responses - 112		
<u>N</u>	<u>Response Type</u>	<u>Degree of Satisfaction</u>
107	Yes	95.54%
5	No	4.46%
112		100.00%

This objective also included responses from staff members as a means of indicating the success of the program in the recreational, educational, and cultural areas. The teachers were approaching this question from another point of view since they were actually the individuals who were assisting in the implementation of the program. These teachers actually experienced the time and effort necessary to present the various facets of such a program. Their input was valuable for future programs and is illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4

Teachers' Input Regarding Educational, Recreational,
and Cultural Activities

Total Number of Teacher Responses - 20	
<u>N</u>	<u>Response (Value)</u>
3	Not Adequate(0)
1	Good(3)
7	Very Good (4)
9	Excellent(5)
20	

Generally, the teachers felt that the various activities offered were quite adequate. Their comments indicated that the cultural aspect needed some improvement.

The last part of objective 3, which was indicative of the overall success of the program, included the re-enrollment issue. When parents were asked if they would enroll their child in future summer programs, there was an overwhelming positive response as indicated in Table 5. There were actually no negative responses to this question.

Table 5

Indication of Re-enrollment

Total Number of Parental Responses - 112		
<u>N</u>	<u>Response Type</u>	<u>Degree of Satisfaction</u>
2	No Answer	1.78%
110	yes	98.22%
112		100.00%

Objective 4: During the implementation of the three-month program, it was determined that the program was economically sound and cost effective for these parents as evidenced by 90% of the parents indicating the rates are within their financial means, and that 18 out of 20 staff members would agree that payment for services was fair and competitive.

The parent questionnaires revealed that the majority of parents felt that the cost of the program was within their means. Some also indicated through written comments that the children were offered a great deal considering the amount of money charged. Their satisfaction regarding its cost effectiveness can also be related to the re-enrollment factor noted previously in Table 5. The results of this part of the objective are noted in Table 6.

Table 6

Parents' Satisfaction Regarding Cost Effectiveness

Total Number of Parental Responses - 112		
<u>N</u>	<u>Response Type</u>	<u>Degree of Satisfaction</u>
6	No Answer	5.35%
103	Yes	91.97%
3	No	2.67%
112		100.00%

Although the program was not subsidized by any outside entity and tuition was its primary source of income, the writer made every effort to ensure fair payment to the teachers for services rendered. After tabulating responses from teacher questionnaires, it was determined that staff members were basically satisfied with the salaries paid. Table 7 provides feedback for this objective.

Table 7

Teachers' Satisfaction of Salaries

Total Number of Teacher Responses - 20	
<u>N</u>	<u>Response Type</u>
18	Yes
2	No
20	

Objective 5: During the implementation of the program, it was demonstrated that approximately 40 children who are enrolled and who have siblings in the program will have the opportunity to spend two and one half hours of various parts of the day with brothers and sisters as evidenced by the writer's observations, teacher, and parent questionnaires demonstrating that this time was made available.

The writer, during the planning stages of the program, made special efforts to devise a schedule which would include shared time for siblings. As the program progressed through the implementation stage, it was observed by the writer that this particular effort was, for the most part, successful.

According to the tabulated responses of both parent and teacher questionnaires, it was also indicated that such a time was provided daily for a certain period. These results can be observed in Tables 8 and 9.

Table 8

Teachers' Indication of Shared Time Among Siblings

Total Number of Teacher Responses - 20	
<u>N</u>	<u>Response Type</u>
14	Yes
1	No
5	Sometimes
20	

Table 9

Parents' Indication of Shared Time Among Siblings

Total Number of Parental Responses - 112		
<u>N</u>	<u>Response Type</u>	<u>Degree of Satisfaction</u>
77	No Siblings	68.75%
32	Yes	28.57%
3	No	2.68%
112		100.00%

Although only 31% or 35 of the parents had more than one child in the program, the majority of those 35 parents indicated that the time made available for sibling sharing was sufficient.

Discussion

After a review and interpretation of these data, it was evident that the five objectives noted were achieved. This would indicate that the goal of providing a quality summer program with a sufficient number of child care hours for children of working parents was a successful venture. The results verified that it was possible to design and implement such a program in an area where there were very few available community facilities which offered such resources and activities as described in this practicum. Such results also confirmed that parents were very

cooperative in supporting the efforts of the staff and expressing this support through their many positive responses to the parent questionnaire.

As previously mentioned in this practicum report, a very important aspect related to the success of such a program was the choice of staff members who were hired to implement this task. It required individuals who were willing to take part in an adventure that had not been tested in this particular setting, or in any other setting within this local community. The staff worked together, planned for the care of the school age child, and ultimately assisted these children in experiencing and enjoying their childhood.

Since the writer's implementation of the practicum summer program and the acceptance and success it has enjoyed, it is more than likely that such a program will continue into future summers. Children of school age in this local community who have working parents will now have a safe and productive environment in which to spend their summer months. It was determined that this program met the needs of the children by providing a warm, caring atmosphere and promoted independence, initiative, responsibility, and respect. Every effort was made to encourage creativity and cultural diversity. It met the needs of the parents by providing quality care and an affordable program.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that additional time and planning be provided for the staff to study the possibilities for the children to experience various cultural events. This time could possibly be provided during the staff orientation week.
2. It is recommended that options for transportation be reviewed and a more viable means found to facilitate movement of large groups from one place to another.
3. It is recommended that additional field trips be provided in order that the children may take part in the variety of educational, recreational, and cultural events offered in the area.
4. It is also recommended that this program continue to be part of the planning for future summers.

Dissemination

Presently, this practicum has been shared with a large archdiocesan school system in the local area. There are also possibilities of distribution among administrators in nearby communities. Since there is an obvious need for school age child care programs during the vacation months, it is hoped that this would be a catalyst in assisting to inspire interest in the development of similar programs in their local situation. Copies of the practicum will also be submitted to local park and planning officials for possible consideration of including various aspects of the program into their summer planning.

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APPENDIX A
PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

SOMETHING

47

NEW!

SUMMER PROGRAM

This year we would like to offer a Ten Week Summer Program which will be held from June 11th thru August 17th. This program is being established to meet the needs of working parents by providing quality care for children ages 4 1/2 to 12.

The program offers a diverse and creative environment. The enrichment classes in Math, Reading and Bible Studies give the children a wide range of learning experiences. The afternoon programs of swimming and bowling along with educational trips and other outdoor activities provide exercise and relaxation for children.

It is a creative alternative to a baby sitter and gives the children an opportunity to socialize with children of their own age, and to experience, at various times, children of other age groups.

If you are interested in having your child/children attend such a program, please fill out the form below expressing this interest. Return it to school by March 16th.

Thank you,

CHILD'S NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PRESENT GRADE: _____

I AM INTERESTED IN:

SESSION #1 _____

SESSION #2 _____

BOTH: _____

PARENT OR GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE: _____

APPENDIX B
NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

The County Department of Parks and Recreation offers summer recreational day camps and summer "playgrounds" (drop-in programs) at dozens of locations around the county.

■ **RECREATIONAL DAY CAMPS** offer one- and two-week programs for children aged 6 to 11 who have completed first grade. Sessions run from June 18 and Aug. 10.

Most camps run from Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

All camps close July 4. Activities include arts and crafts, games, music, drama, special events, field trips and swimming.

Special courses in art, ceramics, computers, dance, gymnastics, nature and tennis are available at some centers. Parents must register their child and pay a fee. For further information and fee details, call your area recreation number below.

■ **SUMMER PLAYGROUNDS** are open, drop-in programs for children aged 6 and over. They run for six weeks from June 25 to Aug. 3. Morning and afternoon activities include arts and crafts, special events, games and trips.

Children come and go as they please. The playgrounds are free of charge, although there may be charges for special events, craft items and bus rides. No registration is required.

Playgrounds are closed July 4, and open sites may be closed in bad weather.

The Department of Recreation divides the county into three recreation areas. More information about programs in each area can be obtained at the following numbers:

Northern Area:

Central Area:

Southern Area:

The listings that follow show the day camps and summer playgrounds in each area.

NORTHERN AREA

RECREATIONAL DAY CAMPS

Day camps offer one- or two-week sessions from June 18 to August 10. Open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Closed July 4. To confirm dates of program and for fee information or other details, call

CENTRAL AREA

RECREATIONAL DAY CAMPS

One- and two-week camps are offered between June 18 and August 10 for first grade to age 11. Open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Closed July 4. For fees and other information call number shown.

SOUTHERN AREA

RECREATIONAL DAY CAMPS

Day camps operate in one- and two-week sessions from June 18 to Aug. 10. For ages 6 to 11 who have completed first grade. Open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Extended hours available. Closed July 4. For fees and other information call numbers shown.

Camps meet special needs

The following camps are specially designed for people with physical or learning disabilities:

students with learning disabilities.

CAMP

Day camp for children ages 2 to 8 with special needs in speech or language. Also language enhancement programs for normally developing children.

CAMP

The Mountains. For kids with minimal learning disabilities. Sports, competitions, rocketry, more.

THE

ACADEMY

A six-week program for

SUMMER PLAYGROUNDS

Summer playgrounds are open from June 25 to August 3. All run from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

See DAY, page 26

Montgomery offers specialized sports camps

APPENDIX C
LETTER FROM CITY OFFICIAL



THOMAS L. BASS
MAYOR

CITY OF
4310 GALLATIN STREET
985-5000

51

May 1, 1990

WARD ONE

DOUGLAS S. DUDROW
SUSAN KRIXER-ADAMS

WARD TWO

ANNA L. FRANKLE
COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT

ANNE HEALEY

WARD THREE

MARY K. PRANGLEY
COUNCIL PRESIDENT

SCOTT R. WILSON

WARD FOUR

CHARLES P. LAWRENCE
LUCILLE C. BROGDEN

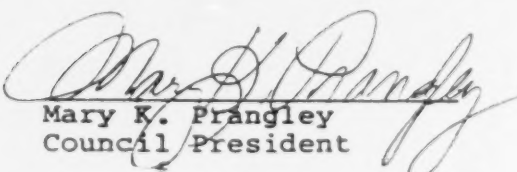
WARD FIVE

ROBERT W. ARMENTROUT
CHARLES L. FALVEY

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to verify that at the present time the City of Missoula maintains an after school program during the school year, whereby children are picked up at their elementary schools and taken to Magruder Park. Here they receive supervised child care services until 6:00 p.m. During the summer months, for six weeks beginning at the end of June, there are free supervised programs available for children in the area, from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. The children are allowed to come and go as they please and may spend as much time as they wish on the activities and crafts provided. There are also some extended hours provided at the park during this six-week period, for a minimal fee.

Provision for child care programs during the summer months is a critical issue, and although they exist in some communities, effort should be made to support more of these programs with extended hours and weeks in our local communities.


Mary K. Prangley
Council President

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Parent Evaluation and Recommendation Questionnaire

Date _____

Number of Children in the Program _____

Child(ren)'s Name(s): _____

Sessions Attended: 1st ____ 2nd ____ Both ____

In order to best serve you, the "working" parent, and to provide a sound educational, recreational and cultural program for your child, it would be extremely helpful if you would take a few minutes to answer the following questions. Please check an appropriate space, comment if you choose.

1. Did you find the hours of 7 A.M. to 6 P.M. sufficient to meet your needs?

A) Yes ____ No ____ C) Would Prefer Earlier

A.M. Opening _____

D) Other: (Please Explain) _____

2. Was there an opportunity for your child to share with you some of the activities and learning experiences that they had during the program?

A) Yes ____ B) No ____ C) Sometimes ____

3. If you did have a chance to see some of your child's work, do you feel that the educational aspect was beneficial to your child?

A) Yes ____ B) No ____ C) Some ____

(Please mention which one, if possible _____

4. What did you and your child think about the recreational activities offered? (i.e. swimming, bowling, gym, field trips, etc.?)

A) Enjoyable ____ B) Not So Enjoyable ____

C) Enjoyable, but would like to see more of _____

5. If you had a preference for a certain activity, what was it? Why? _____

6. In considering all facets of the program - time, trips, arts & crafts, snacks, special guest activities, bowling, swimming, etc., do you feel that the program was worth what you paid?

A) Yes ____ B) No ____ Because _____

7. Was the program cost effective for you?

A) Yes ____ B) No ____

8. If you had more than one child in the program, did you feel that they had opportunities to see each other and to spend time together?

A) Yes ____ B) No ____

How were you able to determine this?

A.) Children told you _____

B.) You observed it _____

C.) All of the above _____

9. Would you enroll your child in our summer program again?

A) Yes _____ B) No _____

If no, why? _____

10. Finally, would you recommend our summer program to your friends? A) Yes _____ B) No _____

C) No, because _____

All papers should be returned to the main school office by ... Thank you for taking the time to fill it out!

APPENDIX E
TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

57

Teacher Evaluation and Recommendation Questionnaire

Date: _____

Name _____

Age Group You Worked With _____

Sessions Worked: 1st _____ 2nd _____ Both _____

In planning for future summer programs it would be extremely helpful to have your input regarding the following questions.

Please check or fill in where appropriate:

1. Did you find your working hours to be
A) Adequate _____ B) Not enough _____
C) Too long _____
2. Was your salary within a range that you feel was reasonable?
A) Yes _____ B) No _____
C) Other _____
3. Do you feel that brothers and sisters had adequate time slots and activities provided for them to share together?
A) Yes _____ B) No _____
C) Sometimes _____

4. In reviewing the various components of the program how would you rate them on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest)?
- Educational ____ Recreational ____ Cultural ____
5. Finally, what recommendations can you make for future summer programs?

Thank you, please return to office by ...

APPENDIX F
JOURNAL FORM

60

Date: / /

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or printed text on the paper. A few small dark specks are visible near the top edge, likely scanning artifacts.